
Background Report: Parks and Recreation Element of the New Town Plan

November 12, 2004
Planning, Zoning and Development Department

L e e s b u r g



Respectful of the Past
Mindful of the Future

Table of Contents

Summary of the Parks and Recreation Element of the 1997 Town Plan	1
Parks and Facilities	1
Recreation.....	2
Greenways	2
Analysis of 1997 Town Plan Goals and Objectives.....	2
Development of a Master Plan Document.....	2
Achievement and Maintenance of Park Facilities.....	3
Summary of Other Plan's Guidance on Parks and Recreation	4
Comprehensive 20-Year Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan.....	4
Loudoun County General Plan	5
Existing Conditions, Trends, and Changes	6
Findings: Priority Issues for the New Parks and Recreation Element	15
Draft Goal and Objectives for the New Parks and Recreation Element	16

Background Report: Parks and Recreation Element of the New Town Plan

This report is written to provide a basis for the preparation of the Parks and Recreation Element of a new Leesburg town plan. The report summarizes the Parks and Recreation Element of the 1997 Leesburg Town Plan and compares the policies and objectives found therein to the parks and recreation recommendations made by the community at the sector and visioning meetings conducted by the Town in the summer and fall of 2003. A summary of the recommendations collected at these meetings was reported to the Planning, Economic Development, and Environmental Advisory Commissions, and members of the community on June 17, 2004, at the “Workshop on Public Comment Themes.”

This report also assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the 1997 Town Plan related to its coverage of parks and recreation issues, and notes whether progress has been made in achieving the 1997 Town Plan’s objectives. Relevant sections of the Loudoun County General Plan and other documents are reviewed to determine how the policy guidance for parks and recreation compares with the parks and recreation goals and objectives of the Town. In addition, it includes a brief review of existing conditions and trends. Finally, the report suggests guidelines for the content of a new parks and recreation element.

Summary of the Parks and Recreation Element of the 1997 Town Plan

This element is divided into three main sections, “Parks and Facilities,” “Recreation,” and “Greenways,” the highlights of which are summarized below.

Parks and Facilities

At the writing of the 1997 Town Plan, there were just over 202 acres of Town-owned parks which were described by three classification types: Town (138 acres), Community (31.6 acres), and Neighborhood (33.2 acres.) In addition to those Town parks there were 52 acres of Town parks in the planning/development stage, six park/recreation facilities in the region owned by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (totaling 1,668 acres of park land and 45 miles of trails), five park/recreation facilities located in and owned by Loudoun County government (totaling 1,270 acres of park land), and numerous Loudoun County public schools with after-hours recreation facilities for citizen use. In addition to these public parks and recreation facilities, citizens of Leesburg had access to a number of private and semi-private recreation facilities located in or near Leesburg (such as golf clubs, fitness clubs, and the YMCA), as well as on-site recreation facilities provided by planned residential developments.

In order to measure the adequacy of the Town’s recreation system, the standards of the Virginia Outdoors Plan were utilized, and a review of the facilities in the Town determined that the following facilities were deficient in number: basketball courts, tennis courts, football fields, volleyball courts, bike trails, swimming pools, and picnic tables.

Recreation

The majority of recreation programs, which include classes, activities, and special events for the entire Leesburg community, were held at the Ida Lee Recreation Center. In addition to the Town sponsored programs, citizens could avail themselves of a number of recreation activities and programs offered by the county. However, in their strategic plan, the Leesburg parks and recreation department identified the need in the future for additional senior citizen, teen, and organized sports activities.

Greenways

While the Town recognized the need for a comprehensive greenways, trails, pedestrian, and bicycle master plan, none was in place at the writing of the 1997 Town Plan. This actually became an objective that was reached in November 2002 with the adoption of the parks department's "Comprehensive 20-Year Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan."

Analysis of 1997 Town Plan Goals and Objectives

This section discusses the Plan's four goals and six objectives for parks and recreation in light of the public comments, draws some conclusions from a comparison of the two, and recommends how those policies should be dealt with in the new town plan. The goals and policies provided in the 1997 Town Plan regarding Parks and Recreation can be divided into two categories: development of a master plan document and achievement and maintenance of master plan aspirations.

Development of a Master Plan Document

1. "To develop a comprehensive park system guided by state standards." (Goal)
2. "Create a park and greenway system including neighborhood, community and Town parks; hiking, biking and nature trails; greenway corridors; and recreation facilities." (Objective)
3. "Plan for future park and facility needs." (Objective)
4. "Complete master plans on all parks." (Objective)

This goal and three objectives of the parks and recreation element are concerned with planning to meet community needs for parks and greenways, considered as a complete system.

Accomplishments: The planning called for in this combination of the goal and objectives was accomplished with the adoption in November 2002 of the "Comprehensive 20-Year Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan." Although the Master Plan generally followed state standards ("Virginia Outdoors Plan"), it did not use the state's generic standards in assessing the Town's park and recreation needs. In that assessment, it followed the guidelines of the National Recreation and Park Association by conducting a citizen survey. Thus, the Master Plan developed a standard for needs specific to Leesburg. That survey and its use in determining policies for future improvements are the great strength of the plan.

Related Community Issues and Concerns: From many of the comments received at public meetings, it is clear that citizens are in favor of planning for future park and facility needs and at present feel the need for a more comprehensive park system throughout Town. There was no

discussion at public meetings of what standards should be used to determine the recreation needs of Leesburg; only examples were given of those needs, i.e. dog parks, senior centers, pedestrian connectivity via trails throughout Town, etc.

Conclusion: The 2002 Master Plan served as the vehicle for the accomplishment of the goal and objectives. However, public comments received at public sector and visioning meetings indicate the desire to continue to plan for future park and facility needs throughout the Town.

Recommendation: The 2002 Master Plan, which accomplishes the park planning called for in the Town Plan, should continue to be used as the major policy document for parks and recreation planning. An update of this plan (which should be done on a regular basis, perhaps beginning in 2008) should continue to incorporate the more tailored approach in determining the Town's needs as was done in the 2002 document.

Achievement and Maintenance of Park Facilities

1. "To ensure parks and facilities are safe and accessible to existing and future neighborhoods." (Goal)
2. "To provide quality programs and services that reflect the interests and needs of the citizens." (Goal)
3. "To improve and enhance environmental quality, recreation, conservation and cultural heritage." (Goal)
4. "Ensure proper development of proffered parks." (Objective)
5. "Provide for necessary capital improvements through the budget planning process." (Objective)
6. "Maintain high quality facilities and programs." (Objective)

These three goals and one objective of the 1997 Town Plan address the need to maintain the Town's park system in acceptable condition. Two objectives call for financial ways to do so (through proffers and budgeting).

Accomplishments: Safe accessibility to parks and facilities has always been a goal of the Town and is one that can be said to have been reached. Accessibility has increased via the expansion of the trail network, including significant links between Ida Lee Recreation Center and the W&OD Trail and the new schools on North King Street (see Map 2). The 2002 Master Plan calls for the acquisition of additional open space and further expansion of the trail network, both of which reflect the Town's meeting the goal of accessibility to parks and facilities.

Related Community Issues and Concerns: Citizen comments focused on the desire for additional park facilities and recreational programs for the entire population (all incomes, age levels, and interests). Funding for these additional facilities and programs was not discussed, and no suggestions were offered in citizen feedback.

Conclusion: The goals and objectives are good guidance for maintaining park facilities. Such guidance is also provided in the 2002 Master Plan. Because the Master Plan is in part an operational plan for the parks and recreation department, it also expresses this guidance in a more thorough and organized manner, making implementation more likely to occur.

Recommendation: Language pertaining to park maintenance found in the 2002 Master Plan should be included in the new town plan.

Summary of Other Plan Guidance on Parks and Recreation

Leesburg Comprehensive 20-Year Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan

The Master Plan adopted by Town Council in November 2002 is the first comprehensive parks and open space plan ever written for the Town. That plan provides a summary of the existing conditions of parks, trails, programs, cultural and historical sites, environmental conditions, expected land development, and the fiscal situation of the parks and recreation department.

At the beginning of the Master Plan process an analysis of demographics and recreational needs was performed via a mail survey of the Leesburg population, the results of which were then used, along with the results of a study of population trends, input from the parks and recreation and planning departments, Parks and Recreation Commission, town manager's office, and public meetings, to develop the Master Plan.

The 2002 Master Plan includes a set of eight concepts (with guidelines for each) for the provision and protection of various parks and recreation amenities, as well as environmental protection, historic preservation, gateways, and streetscapes. They are:

- 1) Develop innovative opportunities for creating additional open space.
- 2) Expand the Town's existing trail network to encourage pedestrian and bicycle circulation throughout the Town and its urban growth area.
- 3) Protect and connect the Town's extensive greenway corridors.
- 4) Protect Leesburg's streams and creeks.
- 5) Identify and protect important cultural and historic sites in Leesburg.
- 6) Ensure a balanced and adequate distribution of active recreation facilities within all quadrants of Leesburg.
- 7) Improve the major gateways and streetscape corridors into Leesburg.
- 8) Expand recreation center facilities and programs only as needed to accommodate major growth that may occur with the annexation of the urban growth area.

Furthermore, the Master Plan provides implementation strategies for the eight concepts focusing on the creation, preservation, and acquisition of open space areas throughout the Town.

Accomplishments: The department of parks and recreation, in conjunction with other Town departments, has achieved the intent of many of these concepts and has taken steps to further them. Since the adoption of the 2002 Master Plan, the Town has expanded and developed a number of parks such as the Ida Lee Recreation Center and Freedom Park. It has also developed numerous portions of the trails throughout Town including the Fairview Street Trail and the Catoctin Street Trail. The 2005-09 capital improvements program allows for the expansion and maintenance of many park and recreation facilities as well as for further expansion of the trail system throughout Town (see Figure 2). All of this will work to create or allow the public the better use of open space,

encourage pedestrian and bicyclist circulation throughout town, help protect greenway corridors, and work to provide a balanced and adequate distribution of recreation facilities throughout town. Since the adoption of the 2002 Master Plan, the Town has also adopted the Creek Valley Buffer Overlay District in the Zoning Ordinance to protect designated streams and creeks throughout the Town by restricting development within certain distances of them. The Town has also worked to protect important historical sites in Leesburg, most recently through the recent inclusion of the Paxton property in order to protect the National Historic Register building onsite. In additional efforts to both identify and protect historic properties and structures, in 2003 the Town produced a walking tour guide to many historic properties throughout Town, Exploring Leesburg, Guide to History and Architecture. Finally, the parks and recreation department works to maintain the aesthetics of the major gateways into and streetscape corridors throughout Leesburg through various landscaping and maintenance measures.

Conclusion: The parks and recreation department has led the Town in the expansion of various parks, trails, recreation programs, and gateway maintenance. The issues of stream and creek protection, historic preservation, and urban design have understandably not received as much direct attention from the department since they are not major functions of the parks and recreation department and the question of whether or not they should fall under the purview of that department is one that warrants further discussion. Overall, the concepts are good with helpful guidelines for each.

Recommendation: The concepts relating to parks and recreation found in the 2002 Master Plan should be considered for the basis of the goals and objectives of the parks and recreation element of the new town plan. The concepts of the Master Plan dealing with environmental protection, historic preservation, and urban design need not be included with the parks and recreation element since they are addressed in other elements of the new town plan.

The Loudoun County General Plan

The Loudoun County General Plan offers both general and specific guidance towards the Town in its discussion of parks, recreation, and open spaces. The four points of guidance are the following:

- All public school sites, including their recreational facilities, should be developed near users and connected to those users through sidewalks or trails.
- The County should work with the Town regarding open-space preservation and the development of a countywide trail system that would link various natural, historic, and recreational resources. Specifically, two potential trails are listed as priorities: a connector between the W&OD Trail in Leesburg and Whites Ferry on the Potomac River and the Potomac Heritage Trail (which would run between Fairfax and Harpers Ferry, W.V.) The General Plan calls for the creation of a greenways and trails plan to address these specific trails and others; however, this has not been completed at this time (nor do county parks planning staff expect it to occur in the near future.) The County has, however, adopted the “Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan” (2003), which discusses the locations for potential bicycle/pedestrian linkages from certain places in the Town and where they should extend into the county. Examples of these include: A link between Leesburg and Cascades along Route 7, links along Plaza Street and Sycolin Road to Belmont Ridge Road, links between Leesburg and Whites Ferry and the C&O Canal along Route 15, Dry Hollow Road and Balls Bluff Road, and

links between Leesburg and Middleburg along Gledsville Road, Oatlands Mill Road, Route 50 and Route 15.

- Residential developments should include parks, squares, greens, or natural open spaces.
- The County should work with the Town to develop bike lanes/paths along Edwards Ferry Road.

The County General Plan also lists as one of its Joint Land Management Area policies the need for compliance with the Annexation Area Development Policies. One of the policies (number 3 under the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policy section of the AADPs) refers to the combined efforts of the Town and County in the development of a regional park 50+ acres in size. The current application under review by the County for Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park is an example of such a park. However, the Town Plan designates that site as Business II (mixed uses) and Business III (employment - office and light industrial flex uses), calling for land uses that create jobs and nonresidential taxes.

Accomplishments: The Town has worked with these guidelines, particularly in the development of trails. In the area of Heritage High School and Simpson Middle School (the Route 621 Trail) and the Dry Hollow/Balls Bluff Trail along the northern border of Town, segments of trails have been created (and further development of these trails is planned for) to connect the school sites in the vicinity. Though they do not appear in the 2005-09 capital improvements plan, the 2002 Master Plan calls for the development of a trail connection between the W&OD Trail and Whites Ferry, as well as the Potomac Heritage Trail, as suggested in the County's General Plan.

Conclusion: The Town has worked with these guidelines and continues to develop trails and sidewalk connections throughout Town, as well as review plans for residential developments in Leesburg to ensure they provide parks, squares, green, or natural open space. The development of bike lanes along Edwards Ferry Road would be the first in the Town. A discussion of bike lanes/paths as a transportation issue rather than a recreational one will be found in the transportation background report. Overall, these guidelines provided by the County are in line with those of the Town.

Recommendation: The Town should continue to communicate and cooperate with the County in order to plan for the achievement of these policies.

Existing Conditions: Trends and Changes Since the 1997 Town Plan

Since the adoption of the 1997 Town Plan, and even the adoption of the 2002 Master Plan, there have been changes to the park system in the Town. These changes primarily include the completion of the Ida Lee Park expansion project, the development of Freedom Park, and the addition of numerous trail segments. Map 1 provides the location of all the parks in the Town (both public and private) and Map 2 shows the location of all trails (both public and private) in the Town. Figure 1 is a listing of all park facilities, both public and private, in the Town. This figure correlates with what is shown in Map 1. The table's identification number for each facility corresponds with the facility labels in Map 1.

The following is a brief description of each type of recreation facility in the Town shown on Map 1 and Figure 1:

Large Urban Park. This type of park is typically a minimum of 50 acres and serves to meet community-based needs as well as preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. It serves the entire community. Ida Lee Recreation Center is a great example of this type of park and is the only one of its kind in Leesburg. Expansions are under consideration (indoor pool, outdoor pool, soccer fields, etc.).

Community Park. This type of park serves the community-based needs as well as it preserves unique landscapes and open spaces as the large urban park does. However, it is smaller in size (30-50 acres) and serves two or more neighborhoods in a ½ mile to 3 mile area. There are three parks of this type in Town, an example of which is Olde Izaak Walton Park.

Neighborhood Park. This type of park is usually between 5 and 10 acres in size and is the basic unit of the park system, serving as the recreation and social focus of the neighborhood. This type of park typically provides more informal active (than larger parks) and passive recreation opportunities and serves residences within ¼ mile to ½ a mile. There are 37 parks of this type in Town, most of which are owned and managed by the private sector as part of residential developments. Town reliance on provision of these through development approval is a good way to relieve the Town of capital and operational costs, while providing needed park space. Facilities remain private and restrictive, but that is not a major problem for these local parks as long as all residents are served.

Mini-park. This type of park is typically between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size and provides limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs for those residents within ¼ mile. There are only two of these in the Town, Georgetown Park and Raflo Park. Locals use both of these parks, especially during the lunch hour, and people on the W & OD Trail also heavily use Georgetown Park.

Sports Complex. This type of park is a consolidation of formally programmed athletic fields and facilities typically on a site of at least 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal. This type of park is strategically located to best serve the community, and there are typically fewer of these than the more informal neighborhood, community, or large urban parks. There is only one of these located in the Town, Freedom Park, which is used heavily by local youth recreation leagues.

Natural Resource Area. The purpose of this type of park is to preserve significant natural resources, landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. The size and location of this type of park is dependent on the resources available. There is only one of these types of parks in the Town, Edwards Landing Park, but there are others right outside the Town boundaries, such as Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park and Rust Sanctuary.

Special Use. This category covers a variety of types of parks, each usually oriented towards a single purpose. The size and location of this type of park are dependent on the specific use it is designed for. They include two privately owned golf courses, an equestrian facility, the Town's skate park, and two cultural resource parks associated with the Civil War battlefield at Ball's Bluff. Also found in this category are the open spaces associated with the Town and county governmental buildings.

School Park. This category includes the recreational facilities found at each public school in Town, which are used intensively by organized sports leagues throughout the year. The size of this type of

park is determined by the location and design of the school property. All fourteen of the school properties in Town are heavily used by organized recreation programs.

Figure 1: Park Facilities

Map Number	Facility	Acres	Classification *	Amenities	Managed / Owned By
1	Ida Lee Park	138	Large Urban	Recreation center with indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness equipment, meeting rooms, indoor racquetball courts, tennis courts, soccer/lacrosse fields, playground, picnic shelter, picnic tables, bandstand, trails	Town
2	Foxridge Park	9	Community	Softball/soccer field, half basketball court, picnic shelter, playground	Town
3	Olde Izaak Walton Park	21	Community	Pond, trails, meeting room	Town/Private
4	Potomac Crossing Park	6	Community	Baseball, tennis, basketball, shelter	Town/NVRPA
5	Brandon Park	2	Neighborhood	Grass fields (no formal playing fields)	Town
6	Carrvale Park	3	Neighborhood	Passive park with open space	Town
7	Greenway Park	4	Neighborhood	Tot lot, basketball court	Town
8	Robinson Park	10	Neighborhood	Baseball/softball field	Town
9	Rotary Park	0.5	Neighborhood	Basketball court, tot lot, picnic tables	Town
10	Tuscarora Park	29	Neighborhood	Picnic shelter, playground, access to W&OD Trail	Town
11	Greenway Farms	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court	Private
12	Woodlea Manor Club House	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court	Private
13	Clubhouse Condos	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, playground	Private
14	Tuscarora Creek Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground	Private
15	Fox Ridge	n/a	Neighborhood	Pool, tennis court, playground	Private
16	Crestwood	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
17	Exeter HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground, multi-use court	Private

Figure 1: Park Facilities

Map Number	Facility	Acres	Classification *	Amenities	Managed / Owned By
18	Exeter	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground, multi-use court	Private
19	Fieldstone Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground	Private
20	Potomac Crossing HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, playground	Private
21	Potomac Crossing Playground #2	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
22	Edwards Landing HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground	Private
23	Mayfair Commons Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, multi-use court	Private
24	Leesburg Commons	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
25	Hunters Crossing Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, playground	Private
26	The Manor Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, playground	Private
27	Meadows Lane	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
28	The Glen Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, playground	Private
29	Adams Drive Condominiums	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, playground	Private
30	Hancock Place Playground #1	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
31	Cavalier Arms Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool	Private
32	Fox Chase Condominiums	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court	Private
33	Bellemeade Apartments	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court	Private
34	Leesburg Gateway Condominiums	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool	Private
35	Stratford HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool	Private
36	Evergreen Meadow HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool	Private
37	Tavistock Farms HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court	Private
38	Kincaid Forest HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground	Private
39	Potomac Station HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, playground	Private

Figure 1: Park Facilities

Map Number	Facility	Acres	Classification *	Amenities	Managed / Owned By
40	Potomac Station Apartments Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool	Private
41	Sycamore Hill HOA Clubhouse	n/a	Neighborhood	Clubhouse, pool, tennis court, playground, multi-use court	Private
42	Leesburg Mobile Home Park	n/a	Neighborhood	Playground	Private
43	Georgetown Park	1	Mini-park	Benches, picnic tables	Town
44	Raflo Park	3	Mini-park	Passive park with gazebo, picnic tables, access to the W&OD Trail	Town
45	Freedom Park	20	Sports Complex	Baseball/softball fields, football/soccer field, concession building	Town
46	Edwards Landing Park	32	Natural Resource Area	Nature trails, pavilion	Town
47	Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park	67	Natural Resource Area	Passive park with trails and scenic overlook	NVRPA
48	Keep Loudoun Beautiful Park	3	Natural Resource Area	Picnic tables, boat launch	County
49	Rust Sanctuary	62	Natural Resource Area	Trails, picnic tables, nature center, meeting rooms	Audubon Naturalist Society
50	Ball's Bluff Regional Park	223	Special Use	Trails, National Cemetery, historic battlefield location	NVRPA
51	Veteran's Park at Ball's Bluff	86	Special Use	Small boat launch, interpretative center, trails	Town
52	Catoctin Skate Park	0.5	Special Use	Skate park (rollerblading, skateboarding, BMX bikes)	Town
53	Westpark Golf Course	96	Special Use	Public golf course	Private
54	Goose Creek Golf Course	107	Special Use	Public golf course	Private
55	Morven Park	1,200	Special Use	Equestrian event facilities, gardens, trails, museums	Westmoreland Davis Memorial Foundation, Inc.
56	Town Hall Green	n/a	Special Use	Benches	Town
57	Balch Library	n/a	Special Use	Benches, fountain	Town
58	Courthouse Green	n/a	Special Use	Benches	County
59	County Government Green	n/a	Special Use	Benches	County

Figure 1: Park Facilities

Map Number	Facility	Acres	Classification *	Amenities	Managed / Owned By
60	Leesburg E. S.	n/a	School Park	Playground, baseball, soccer	L.C. Public Schools
61	Ball's Bluff E.S.	n/a	School Park	Playground, baseball, soccer/football	L.C. Public Schools
62	Catoctin E.S.	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, soccer/football, track, playground	L.C. Public Schools
63	Cool Springs E.S.	n/a	School Park	Playground, track, softball	L.C. Public Schools
64	Evergreen Mill E.S.	n/a	School Park	Playground, track, baseball, soccer	L.C. Public Schools
65	F.H. Reid E.S.	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, playground	L.C. Public Schools
66	J.W. Tolbert Junior E.S.	n/a	School Park	Playground, softball, soccer/football	L.C. Public Schools
67	J. L. Simpson M.S.	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, auxiliary gymnasium, softball, soccer/football, hard courts	L.C. Public Schools
68	Harper Park M.S.	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, auxiliary gymnasium, soccer/football	L.C. Public Schools
69	Smart's Mill M.S.	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, auxiliary gymnasium	L.C. Public Schools
70	Loudoun County H.S.	n/a	School Park	Track, stadium, football practice field, soccer fields, baseball, softball, gymnasium, auxiliary gymnasium	L.C. Public Schools
71	Heritage H.S.	n/a	School Park	Track, stadium, football practice field, soccer fields, baseball, softball, gymnasium, auxiliary gymnasium	L.C. Public Schools
72	North Street (County Admin. Bldg.)	n/a	School Park	Softball, soccer/football	L.C. Public Schools
73	Douglass Park and Community Center	n/a	School Park	Gymnasium, outdoor roller hockey rink, sand volleyball court, baseball field, basketball court, pavilion, playground	L.C. Public Schools

* Based on National Recreation and Park Association classification system
Source: Leesburg Planning, Zoning and Development Department

In addition to these existing park facilities, the most recent version of the Town's capital improvements program (2005-09) lists twelve parks and recreation projects. The projects are described in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: 2005-2009 CIP Projects

Project	Total Project Costs	Year/s in Which to be Completed
Development of Ida Lee Park Soccer/Lacrosse Field (No. 3) and public building (restrooms, concessions, and storage)	\$1,080,000	2008
Olde Izaak Walton Pond Restoration	\$615,000	2007
Veterans Park at Balls Bluff Improvements (road, parking, boat launch, and picnic areas)	\$3,904,000	2008-09
South Harrison Street Trail (along S. Harrison St. from W&OD Trail to Catoctin Circle)	\$202,450	2008-09
Catoctin Circle SW Trail (north of Rosemead Drive to private trail – completes link to W&OD Trail)	\$310,000	2005
South King Street Trail Phase I (from Governors Drive to Davis Avenue)	\$600,000	2005
South King Street Trail Phase II (from Davis Avenue to W&OD Trail at Douglas Community Center)	\$396,900	2008-09
Ida lee Park Trail Phase II (from Rust Library to Old Waterford Road)	\$305,000	2008
Outdoor Pool (feasibility study for pool at Ida Lee)	\$470,000	2008-09
Barn Renovations at Ida Lee Park (design and engineering services for renovation and preservation of barn)	\$308,500	2007
Lawson Road Pedestrian Bridge (design and engineering of pedestrian and bicycle crossing over Tuscarora Creek)	\$50,000	2009
Rt. 15 (South King Street) Widening (expansion to include bike trail west of Rt. 15 from Evergreen Mill Road to southern corporate limits)	\$5,750,000	2005

Source: Leesburg FY 2005-2009 Capital Improvements Program

The 2002 Master Plan calls for a system of trails that link the major park facilities in Leesburg and regional trails. Map 2 shows the location of existing public trails, which comprise major segments of such a system. The map also shows private trails, constructed as part of required improvements for numerous large land developments, which connect to the larger public trail system. Since the adoption of the 2002 Master Plan the Town has completed numerous trail segments such as:

- Fairview Street Trail,
- Segment of Catoctin Circle Trail (from W. Market Street to the W&OD Trail),
- Portion of Battlefield Parkway Trail (North of Edwards Ferry Road) and along Potomac Station Drive,
- Portion of Dry Hollow/Balls Bluff Trail,
- Portion of Town Loop Trail (along Lawson Road), and
- Portions of the Route 621 Trail (in front of Heritage High School and Freedom Park).

As shown in Figure 2, the Town is planning for approximately \$1.8 million in additional trail construction before 2009, not including the Rt. 15 South widening project (a VDOT project that will include a bike trail).

The Town offers a wide range of recreation programs, such as summer camps, preschool/after-school, and various recreation classes (fitness, arts and crafts, dance, special interest, karate, gymnastics, etc.), through the Ida Lee Recreation Center. The Town also organizes NFL flag football for children. All other sports recreation leagues are organized either privately through the organizations listed below or through the County school district:

- Central Loudoun Youth Football,
- Central Loudoun Little League,
- Loudoun Youth Soccer Association,
- Leesburg Girls Softball,
- Central Loudoun Pee Wee Baseball,
- Greater Loudoun Babe Ruth League, and
- Western Loudoun Lacrosse.

Findings: Priority Issues for the New Parks and Recreation Element

The following is a summary of findings resulting from the preceding analysis and will be used to give direction to the new town plan. This analysis considers the content of the 1997 Town Plan, the Leesburg Comprehensive 20-Year Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan, themes recommended by Leesburg's citizens and commissions, the Loudoun County General Plan, and existing conditions. The findings are followed by proposed goal and objectives for the new element.

Finding: Residents have been satisfied with the Town's park system. While the Town maintains a number of parks throughout Town, the concentration of its efforts has been on the expansion and/or development of larger facilities such as the Ida Lee Recreation Center, Freedom Park, the acquisition of additional open space areas, and the development of the trail system. However, at present it appears that neighborhood parks and neighborhood trails have been relegated primarily to be the responsibility of the private residential developer. The Town provides numerous sports fields—at Freedom Park, Ida Lee Recreation Center, Fox Ridge, and Robinson Park; many sports fields are also provided by the school district. Similarly, while the Town provides numerous recreation programs, the school district and numerous non-profit organizations manage a wide variety of athletic programs utilized by Town residents.

Finding: The Town Plan provides good general guidance. Most importantly, it calls for the preparation of a parks and recreation plan. The 2002 Master Plan is a quality document, relying on a Town-conducted citizen survey to assess needs. The information gathered in that assessment was echoed by citizens at Town Plan meetings. Since another survey could not be done as part of this Town Plan update, the major guidance relating to parks, recreation, open space, trails and greenways, as provided in the Master Plan, should be used in the parks and recreation element of the new town plan.

Finding: Some of the concepts of the parks department's 2002 Master Plan address issues that are not primary to parks and recreation (environmental protection, historic preservation, and urban design), although parks and recreation programs can contribute to those efforts. So those concepts need not be incorporated into the parks and recreation element of the new town plan.

Finding: The 2002 Master Plan provides helpful guidelines on implementing the eight concepts. Many of those guidelines are too detailed to be included in the new town plan; so the Master Plan should remain an important document to assist with implementation of parks and recreation goals and objectives.

Finding: The Master Plan does not have a scheduled date for when it is to be updated. The Town has experienced a lot of growth in the last couple of years and similar growth is projected into the future. On January 1, 2009 the Annexation Area Development Policies expire and the Town/County agreement (regarding county residents use of the Ida Lee Recreation Center at in-town rates) also expires. Keeping in mind that the next Town Plan update will be due in 2010, it seems reasonable to coordinate the update of the Master Plan with the next update of the Town Plan.

Finding: The County General Plan lists as one of its Joint Land Management Area policies the need for compliance with the Annexation Area Development Policies. One of the policies (number 3 under the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policy section of the AADPs) refers to the cooperative efforts of the Town and County in the development of a regional park 50+ acres in size. The current application under review by the County for Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park is an example of such a park. This guidance is reinforced in the Master Plan, where guidance provided suggests that the Town work closely with the County to maximize the Town's active recreation use of the Shellhorn site (the Bolen Park site). Contrary to this is the guidance provided by the existing Town Plan, which identifies this part of the UGA/JLMA as land that should be developed as commercial and employment uses. The inconsistencies between the Master Plan and the Town Plan need to be resolved in this new town plan.

Draft Goal and Objectives for the New Parks and Recreation Element

Below are a draft goal and objectives that staff has prepared for Planning Commission review. In the new town plan, the objectives will be supplemented with more detailed policies about how the objectives will be implemented. In addition, an action plan will be prepared that assigns responsibility for accomplishing tasks and time frames for implementation.

Draft Goal

Leesburg will have a comprehensive, Town-wide park system, which serves the recreational needs of the community in both a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

Draft Objectives

1. Develop innovative opportunities for creating additional open space.
2. Expand the Town's trail network to encourage pedestrian and bicycle access to parks and regional trails.
3. Protect and connect the Town's extensive greenway corridors.

4. Ensure a balanced and adequate distribution of active recreation facilities within all quadrants of Leesburg.
5. Expand Ida Lee Recreation Center facilities and programs as needed to accommodate growth.